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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 27 October1997, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Busacca ..... (Italy)

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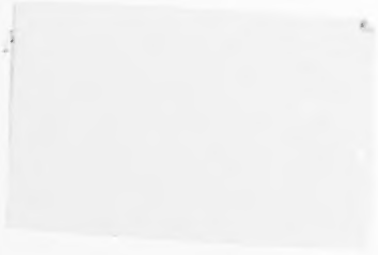

* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 103: Crime prevention and criminal justice (A/52/3, 295, 327, 357, 413 and A/52/447-S/1997/775; A/C.3/52/L.4, L.5, L.6, L.7 and L.8) *(continued)*

Agenda item 104: International drug control (A/52/3, 127, 296, 336, 347, 413 and A/52/447-S/1997/775; A/C.3/52/L.14; E/1997/48) *(continued)*

1. **Mr. Korneliou** (Cyprus) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union and associated countries.

2. His delegation attached great importance to strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, including follow-up to the Naples Political Declaration and Global Action Plan against Organized Transnational Crime, because organized crime – including drugs, money-laundering and terrorism – had spread its operations around the globe and posed a threat to economic and political stability. Cyprus was a party to the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism and the European Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds of Crime and to the relevant United Nations conventions; and it was engaged in a dialogue with the European Union on increasing international cooperation in criminal justice matters. It had concluded many bilateral agreements with other countries with a view to combating transnational crime and drug trafficking. It hosted liaison officers from other countries and cooperated with the International Criminal Police Organization for the purpose of exchanging information and intelligence.

3. On the question of international drug control, he said that, in the light of the unprecedented spread of illicit drugs over the past two decades, the relevant international instruments must be implemented and the role of the United Nations must be enhanced. The special session of the General Assembly in 1998 would focus attention on the issue; however, both political support and financial resources were required.

4. Despite its total commitment to combating drugs, his Government was unable to exercise control over that part of the island that remained under occupation. However, despite the location of Cyprus at the crossroads of three continents, the Government's continuing efforts had greatly reduced illicit drug traffic through the island.

5. His delegation welcomed the establishment of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, representing an integrated approach to drug control and criminal justice that strengthened United Nations efforts. In that regard, a coordinated international approach was vital.

6. **Mr. Mendonça e Moura** (Portugal), Chairman of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, speaking as the representative of Portugal, associated his delegation fully with the statement made by the representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union and associated countries.

7. Speaking as Chairman of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, he reported that considerable progress had been made by the Commission, acting as the preparatory body for the special session of the General Assembly in June 1998, and referred to the report of the Commission acting in that function (E/1997/48). He drew attention to issues to be considered during the preparatory process for the special session (ibid., para. 13).

8. At its inter-sessional meetings in July 1997, the Commission had prepared a comprehensive draft action plan to control amphetamine-type stimulants and their precursors. The plan had been forwarded to Member States for refinement and, before the special session of the General Assembly, would be subject to final consideration by the Commission at its second session as a preparatory body, in March 1998. It had also prepared a comprehensive draft action plan for control of precursors for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The second plan would undergo the same procedure as the first.

9. At its second round of inter-sessional meetings, in October, the Commission had drafted an action plan on broad judicial cooperation which had also been forwarded to Member States for their consideration; and had reached a consensus on a draft statement on money-laundering that reaffirmed Member States' commitment to the proceeds-of-crime provisions of the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and also set out general principles on which to base further anti-money-laundering measures.

10. Also in October, an informal working group had concluded drafting a declaration on demand reduction for adoption at the special session as a major first step in international cooperation on what had previously – and, he believed, wrongly – been considered solely a domestic concern. The draft identified guiding principles and called for cooperative action by States on all aspects of demand reduction.

11. At the third round of meetings, in December 1997, measures would be considered that encompassed the eradication of illicit crops coupled with alternative development. There would also be deliberations on the elements of the political declaration that would represent the major message to be issued by the Assembly at its special session.

12. The Commission, as the preparatory body, at its session in March 1998, would finalize its preparations for the special session of the General Assembly and would leave enough time for additional informal meetings in the event that any items required further consideration.

13. He was convinced that the special session would produce very substantive results, given the growing importance that Governments attached to drug issues; however, those results must be conveyed to the public at large. Therefore, the General Assembly must aim for a political declaration that contained a solemn commitment from all Governments to deploy the necessary political will to take decisive action on drugs, and the declaration must be approved at the highest political level in order to gain the public attention it needed. In that connection he welcomed the fact that a number of heads of State or Government had already indicated that they would participate.

14. **Ms. Morgan-Moss** (Panama) said that the service sector, especially banking, accounted for a major part of her country's economy. However, that infrastructure, set up to promote trade, had been used by drug traffickers for laundering money, and the State, out of strong moral considerations, had taken effective measures that also maintained intact its sovereignty and its renown as a legitimate world banking and trading centre.

15. The laundering of drug money was punishable under Panamanian legislation, which required proof that transactions were legitimate. A special unit had been set up to strengthen the institutions responsible for suppressing drug trafficking. It was used by the Public Prosecutor to investigate and confiscate the proceeds of illicit activities.

16. In 1995 a high-level commission against drug-related money-laundering had been set up to advise the President on suitable measures; it was composed of representatives from the public and private sectors. One of the commission's recommendations had resulted in the establishment of a financial analysis unit, under the President's National Security and Defence Council, to analyse banking and trading information from financial institutions. All banks in Panama were obliged to operate with a sufficient level of diligence to prevent drug-related transactions that concealed the money's origins. Under the law, all operations above a certain sum had to be identified, and suspicious operations reported to the financial analysis unit. The activities of many other financial, insurance and trading companies were also covered.

17. The national banking commission's authority to inspect the documents and operations of banks had been strengthened, and the commission had imposed strict requirements for awarding operating licences. Similarly, any person entering the country had to declare cash in excess of $10,000, and any lawyer or legal firm acting as the resident agent of a Panamanian company must know the client and keep sufficient information to identify him or it to the relevant authorities when required.

18. Banks must also comply with internal and external audits; the banking commission had the power to impose severe sanctions if they failed to do so.

19. The banking commission transmitted all declarations and observations received from the controlling bodies to the financial analysis unit. All relevant documents must be kept by the banks for at least five years.

20. Panama was a member of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, and had incorporated its recommendations in national legislation. Panama's financial analysis unit had been used as a model, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean. In July 1997, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the six Central American countries had signed a convention against drug-related money-laundering. Moreover, Panama had recently hosted the first hemisphere-wide congress on the prevention of money-laundering. In its desire to assist efforts to crack down on money-laundering, Panama was willing to make the relevant legal texts available to interested countries.

21. Panama's recent ratification of the major international conventions on protecting intellectual property and its entry to the World Trade Organization were part of its effort to ensure the application of national and international intellectual property laws. A special prosecutor's office had been set up to that effect.

22. Corruption, like money-laundering, drug trafficking and terrorism, required a large-scale response on the part of many States together. It threatened the culture, institutions and very existence of many countries. Extreme cases of corruption had led the Organization of American States to adopt the Inter-American Convention against Corruption and to allocate funds for eradication of that evil. An agreement had been signed between the public prosecutor's office and a foundation for civil liberties, which would lead to action against corruption, including publicizing the work of the

justice department and establishing a committee to promote measures to improve the justice system.

23. Panamanians were very aware of the importance of laws and institutions, as the only bulwark against corruption, which vitiated morality, democracy and the rule of law and militated against efforts to reinforce the bonds of a society that wanted to stay civilized.

24. **Mr. Ruiz Cabañas** (Mexico) said that the fight against drugs and drug-related crime was a matter of the highest priority for his Government. The phenomenon was a grave threat not only to the physical and moral integrity of youth and childhood, to the health of society, and to public tranquillity and order, but also to national security and the rule of law. Mexico had undertaken a series of measures for the reduction of demand, the fight against money-laundering and the elimination of drug trafficking, and illicit-crop production. Those measures included strengthened legislation against drug-smuggling rings. His Government had also improved mechanisms for international cooperation in that area, through bilateral and regional agreements. However, such actions were often defeated by the sophisticated and ever-changing techniques used by drug-smuggling networks, which did not respect national frontiers.

25. His delegation was participating actively in the work of the Commission on Narcotics Drugs as the preparatory body for the special session of the General Assembly, and would continue its efforts with a view to the elaboration of recommendations to be adopted at that session. The adoption of a clear political declaration reaffirming a global approach to international drug control would be a major achievement of the special session, showing the determination of the international community to combat the problem together.

26. The scope and complexity of the drug-trafficking phenomenon called for energetic measures, through concerted action by every State. His Government would make every effort for the success of the special session, marking a new era of action against the scourge of drugs; to that end, all Member States should be represented at the highest level.

27. **Mr. Laourou** (Benin) said it was widely recognized that drug trafficking and crime were interdependent phenomena and transcended frontiers. Different attitudes to the problem were due at least in part to varied levels of development in different parts of the world. Concerted action was needed at the local, regional and international levels, involving both preventive and repressive measures, to help to prevent the movement of illicit activities from one region to another. Preventive measures included information, education and awareness campaigns to attack the root causes of the problem, including poverty.

28. His Government's efforts in the fight against crime and drug trafficking were organized through a multi-disciplinary national commission, which organized training and awareness sessions, particularly for the young and for the prison population. Such national measures were supported by other States through bilateral and multilateral cooperation. His Government was grateful to those States, and appealed to them to increase their support.

29. In the fight against crime and drug trafficking, a regional and international perspective was needed, and Benin welcomed the recent strengthening of the activities of the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI). Although the Institute was supported by the Organization of African Unity, most of the assessed contributions to the Institute remained unpaid, largely owing to the difficult economic situation in contributing countries. His delegation appealed to all States to contribute, and appreciated the efforts of the Secretary-General to promote increased funding.

30. His delegation welcomed the creation of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, and encouraged its Executive Director to develop strategies for the mobilization of new resources from the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society. His delegation appealed to donor countries to provide unconditional support to the Office, enabling a more balanced distribution of its resources and the ability to reallocate resources in response to any new developments.

31. **Mr. Diao Mingsheng** (China) said that the fight against the worldwide phenomenon of drug trafficking and drug-related crime had been expanded to cover all segments of society. The international community should adopt a balanced strategy against the illicit supply of and demand for narcotics, and should take a more action-oriented approach, enhancing international and regional cooperation. Progress had already been achieved over the past decade, with strengthened cooperation in the control and interdiction of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, the international community should deliberate on the global drugs situation and express its strong political will to improve international cooperation in that area. The will of the international community to do so was reflected in the preparatory work for the upcoming special session of the General Assembly. He hoped that the latter would be results-oriented and would provide an

effective basis for international drug control in the coming century.

32. While making steady advances in economic and social development, China was also undertaking tremendous efforts in drug control through strengthened law enforcement and control of domestic narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances, and chemicals used in the manufacture of illicit drugs. Much attention had been given to widespread and aggressive advocacy for drug control and preventive education. With the help of the International Narcotics Control Board, the Government had successfully foiled several attempts to divert chemicals into illicit channels and many attempts to smuggle such chemicals out of the country. Through cooperation with law-enforcement bodies in the countries concerned, China had also uncovered activities by foreign nationals for the illicit manufacture and trafficking of amphetamines on Chinese territory. His Government would spare no effort to participate in international efforts for drug control, and looked forward to continuing its close cooperation with international organizations and Governments during preparations for the special session.

33. The ever-changing and complicated drug problem constituted a formidable challenge for China and for the international community, requiring improved cooperation and mutual assistance. China would not only continue to undertake major domestic efforts but would also, as always, attach importance to strengthening international cooperation, and would support the central role of the United Nations in that field.

34. **Mrs. Pulido** (Venezuela) said that dialogue among countries and the sharing of experiences were of particular importance in the area of drug control and drug-related crime. The international community must work to harmonize policies and establish complementary strategies for a better approach to the problem, in the light of the constantly changing tactics used by drug traffickers. Cooperation among the States of the Rio Group was a useful tool for that purpose at the bilateral, subregional and regional levels. Her delegation also welcomed the establishment of the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention in Vienna; a combined approach to the problems of drug trafficking and crime would improve the ability of the United Nations to take effective measures.

35. The tenth anniversary of the 1988 Convention would be a useful opportunity to evaluate what had been done so far, to plan new activities and to identify means of making them more effective. The implementation of the Convention had made it possible to evaluate both its strengths and its weaknesses, as a result of which the international community would be able to define new policies to adapt to the new manifestations of the problem. Thus, with the approach of the new century, it would be suitably equipped to deal with the scope and dynamism of the problem of illicit drugs.

36. Her Government considered that the drug problem and drug-related crime, as well as corruption, constituted real threats to the security of the State, because they endangered the country's predominantly young population and were a serious risk for the stability of democratic institutions. Consequently, her Government attached great importance to such initiatives as the elaboration of an international convention against organized international crime, and to the willingness of international financial institutions to cooperate in combating the phenomenon.

37. Her Government had recently promoted to ministerial rank the chairman of a national commission against drug abuse, thereby giving that body greater political influence and ability to ensure coordination. Good results had been achieved at the regional level, and the transit of illicit drugs through Venezuelan territory had been greatly curbed. Much success had been achieved in preventing the misappropriation of precursors, and effective standards had been established for combating money-laundering. Thanks to international cooperation on the multilateral and bilateral levels and the support of non-governmental organizations, the Government had implemented such measures as improved training for judicial and police investigators, increased participation by civil society in the prevention of trafficking and consumption, the creation of a foundation for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse, tax incentives to encourage the private sector to finance programmes, decentralization of the struggle against drug abuse, a major media campaign emphasizing the role of the family, and a programme to protect street children.

38. However, it was perhaps in the financial sector that the best results had been achieved; to combat money-laundering, a committee had been set up for the purpose of establishing an information network, and financial institutions such as insurance companies, credit card companies, and gambling establishments, as well as the building industry, were required to apply measures for that purpose. In the light of the fact that increasingly open trade policies among neighbouring countries had created new opportunities for trafficking, a considerable effort had been made to prevent drug traffickers from taking advantage of the situation.

39. The measures taken by her Government reflected the seriousness with which it viewed the fight against organized crime; it was intensifying its efforts for international cooperation in many areas, while at the same time moving

forward with fundamental reforms to modernize State institutions.

40. **Ms. Wong** (Singapore) said that her Government had expended considerable resources to stem the problem of illicit drugs and had achieved relative success in that regard by taking a two-pronged approach aimed at reducing both the demand and supply of illegal drugs. Educating the public, particularly youth, on the dangers of narcotic drugs was a key approach in reducing demand. The Central Narcotics Bureau ran a preventive drug-education programme to deter students and high-risk groups from experimenting with drugs and conducted regular countrywide operations to round up suspected drug users. Initial drug offenders were committed to a drug rehabilitation centre for treatment and repeated offenders were subject to a penal-like regime.

41. Singapore had tough laws to prevent the flow of drugs into the country. Convicted drug traffickers received a mandatory death sentence. Although some might call that approach harsh, Singapore's laws worked as an effective deterrent and its drug problem had remained manageable for the past 20 years. Political will and commitment to drug control, not legalization of drugs, were essential to achieve success. The exchange of information both within and between regions was vital to expand cooperation in suppressing illicit drug trafficking. Singapore had a history of working in close cooperation with other countries in that regard and that cooperation had uncovered several international drug syndicates. Her country also participated in regional and international conferences on drug control and worked closely with other countries in the fight against money-laundering.

42. The United Nations must continue to play a leading role in coordinating the efforts of the international community to combat illegal drugs. Singapore was already a party to two of the three United Nations conventions on drugs and had decided to accede to the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Her delegation welcomed the decision to convene the special session of the General Assembly on the question of narcotic drugs and urged Member States to reaffirm their political commitment to international drug control.

43. **Mr. Zmeevsky** (Russian Federation) said that the work of United Nations anti-crime bodies must strive to obtain practical feedback and focus on priority areas of cooperation in combating crime and drug addiction. Maximum use must be made of the Organization's potential in that field through more rational use of resources and greater efficiency.

44. His delegation supported the proposed reconstitution of the Division for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as the Centre for International Crime Prevention, ensuring the autonomy of the Centre's anti-drug and anti-crime subdivisions. With regard to anti-terrorist measures, the Centre should deal with matters relating to criminal law, including cooperation under the conventions on terrorism, exchange of information and extradition, while the political and international legal aspects should continue to be dealt with in the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Sixth Committee. Mandates should be clearly defined, with account taken of financial possibilities.

45. His delegation had consistently stressed the need to ensure adequate financing of all United Nations anti-crime activities and hoped that that question would be resolved within the context of the reform measures being proposed. He commended the fruitful work being carried out by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, but had serious doubts concerning the idea of merging the two bodies, whose work programmes were already overloaded. It was unlikely that a new body of that type would be able to deal effectively with all the issues concerned and might concentrate on law enforcement at the expense of such priority questions as demand reduction and the social and medical aspects. A single anti-crime structure within the Secretariat would simply be counter-productive.

46. The Russian Government was taking a broad range of social, organizational, medical and legal measures to deal with the danger of drugs. The Commission to Prevent Drug Abuse and Illegal Drug Trafficking, set up in 1994, coordinated the activities of all Government anti-drug bodies. A programme had been established to draw up new drug-control legislation, which was being considered in Parliament. His country's anti-drug law-enforcement bodies had been strengthened and had achieved significant progress in their work. The Russian Federation attached considerable importance to expanding its cooperation with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and with potential donor countries. The mobilization of resources would greatly strengthen his Government's drug-control capability in setting up rehabilitation centres and equipping law-enforcement bodies.

47. His delegation supported the creation of an international legal basis for counteracting organized crime. It viewed positively the initiative by Austria concerning a draft international convention to combat the smuggling of illegal migrants and was prepared to work on the draft document submitted. He noted with satisfaction the expanded capability of the United Nations Crime Prevention

and Criminal Justice Programme in providing technical assistance. The Russian Federation and the United Nations had implemented a number of joint projects in that field. Accordingly, his delegation called for a more active exchange of experience in anti-crime and anti-drug cooperation within the framework of the Organization. Bilateral anti-crime cooperation was also important. The Russian Federation had concluded several dozen bilateral agreements in that field and was taking active measures to expand that network.

48. **Mr. Sychow** (Belarus), speaking also on behalf of Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, said that the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme had made it possible to more effectively coordinate anti-crime efforts by the various States in the areas of priority. In that connection, he supported the proposals aimed at strengthening the Programme and the corresponding crime units of the Secretariat. The States on whose behalf he was speaking endorsed the decisions taken at the sixth session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice aimed at adopting practical measures to curb the most dangerous types of crime, and commended the Commission's efforts to develop measures and standards to combat illegal trafficking in firearms.

49. Efforts undertaken at the regional and subregional levels were also important, and active use should be made of the experience acquired in the corresponding organizations. In 1996, the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) had adopted a programme of measures to combat organized crime, which served as the basis for cooperation and joint action against transnational crime. Work was being conducted to draw up agreements on cooperation to combat crime and illegal migration, collaboration by tax-collection services and the transfer of convicts for imprisonment. The CIS councils of ministers for foreign affairs and leaders of security services were actively working together and had recently signed a number of agreements on joint measures to combat terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking and weapons smuggling. Coordinated large-scale anti-crime activities and special operations were being conducted. Law-enforcement bodies were actively using a joint specialized data bank and steps were being taken to set up a unified data bank for the special services.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.